

# Christianity and Crisis

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## Escapist Religion

IT is a sign of the times that so many ministers deal frequently with the fears and anxieties of their people. One can walk down the avenue of a great city, and find a sign-board outside a church, announcing for next Sunday morning's sermon: "How To Manage Our Worries"; and for the evening: "Getting Rid Of Our Apprehensions." Such topics often draw large congregations. Some ministers have the assistance of consulting psychiatrists, and hearers avail themselves of their help.

One would not disparage this ministry to overstrained folk, or to folk who deem themselves overstrained. In the most tranquil and prosperous times there are men and women compelled to shoulder fatiguing loads with unstable nerves. To cleanse their minds from gloomy thoughts and supply courage is actually in some cases to save a life. "Fear not" and "Be not anxious" are commands from the lips of the most exalted Authority. "Perfect peace" is promised to minds stayed on God; and it is the function of a faithful preacher and true shepherd of souls to make plain how this peace may be attained.

But the fact remains that we live in a very dangerous and barbarously brutal world, where millions of our fellow-men are oppressed, discriminated against, impoverished and desperately alarmed for those dear to or dependent upon them. Christians dare not become concentrated on their personal plight. Their own peace of mind is not something to be considered. They are to lose themselves. God has so ordered human life that it is full of hazards, pains and sorrows. Every man finds himself at times in "a sea of troubles." The chief peril is that he becomes too much occupied with his particular irritations and alarms, and engrossed in achieving mental tranquillity.

Jesus spoke of "my peace"; but He did so at the moment when He was feeling upon His conscience the sin of His brothers in God's family, and preparing to risk Himself at Jerusalem with a violent and agonizing death staring Him in the eyes. There is surely something at variance with His mind in much of the current preaching and counselling on

"peace of mind." Those with avid appetites for it are generally egocentrics. And even when the preacher or counsellor brings them within plain sight of the God and Father of Jesus Christ, they may find in Him a pitifully selfish comfort.

In a world where so much is frightening, a Christian must not avert his eyes; where suffering and want are so widespread, his mind should not be serene; where there are so many shameful injustices, his heart should not be unwrung. When one studies the careers of Elijah, Amos, Jeremiah, one is not struck with their peace of spirit; nor with the mental calm of St. Paul. A Greater than they exclaimed: "How am I straitened!" These are they who turned their world upside down and set it more nearly God-side up. They were not bothered by their own or other men's inward disturbance. They did their utmost to increase mental unease. They filled men's horizons with forebodings. These were prerequisites of wholesome repentance and stimulants to vigorous action.

Instead of topics which promise release from anxieties and escape from fears, those eager for prescriptions which promise inner tranquillity might be lifted to a more Christlike mind by adding to and vastly broadening the circle of their worries and thoroughly scaring them with a sight of the issues of the present policies of nations and the usual ways of men. Our generation has been called "shell-shocked"; and millions are jittery and become hysterical over movements which jeopardize their pleasant mode of life. Current psychological preaching which aims at adjusting old and young to circumstances, fitting them smoothly into society's grooves, brightening their outlook on a world which (God knows) is not bright, seems a far cry from the Biblical preaching of righteousness, and of salvation by and to the righteous God. Books on peace of mind may be best-sellers, but the American public needs a lot of disturbing. Closer fellowship with a disturbing Christ is the path to eternal life and to the peace of God.

H. S. C.

## Editorial Notes

THE refusal of the convention of the Episcopal church to seat women delegates who had been duly elected by their dioceses to their position, raises some interesting questions about the reasons for the tardiness of religious communities in meeting the standards of secular society in the matter of equal rights for women. The church may sometimes have higher moral and social standards than the general community, and it may sometimes fall below them. But it is most consistently below the general standards of modern bourgeois society in its refusal to grant women equal rights as persons, this refusal involving it in disobedience to the Apostolic injunction: "In Christ there is—neither male nor female." This tardiness is rather ironic in view of the fact that women bear more than their share of the burdens of the church and exceed their male relatives in devotion to the religious community. The action of the Episcopal convention was the more remarkable because it did not involve the question of ordination. The women were not knocking at the gates of the holy of holies. They were refused admission to the outer court.

This incident may serve to remind the church that the emancipation of women from the restraints to which they were subject in all traditional societies, is one of the real achievements of modern secular idealism to which even the most advanced Christian thought made only ancillary contributions. It may be that there is some deep undertone in a religious community, having nothing to do with Christianity but profoundly related to the impulses of "natural religion," which accounts for the difference in standards between the religious and the general community. It would be well for the Christian church to recognize that however "Christian" its conscious standards are, every church is something of a "religious" community as well as a Christian community. Therefore its life is informed to some degree by these general impulses of "pagan" or natural religion. One of the motives of this pagan religion, reaching far back into primitive life, is the "enmity between the priest and the woman." This enmity may have sexual origin or it may be the contest between the woman as protagonist of the family and the priest as the exponent of the larger community, contrived by priest and warrior. In India, for instance, women had comparative equality in the Vedic period but became completely disinherited when the triumph of the priests was codified in the "Code of Manu." It is worth noting that even in modern life that churches have difficulty in dealing

with the problem of women in proportion to the degree of sacramentalism in their piety. This does not imply an indictment of sacramentalism in general, but does suggest that the animus against women does arise where there is a very explicit area of the sacred. Yet it must be confessed that women have difficulties of some kind in almost every religious community. If a priest is not seeking to prove that a woman cannot be the representative of Christ because Christ was a man, some fundamentalist theologian will seek to disinherit her by quoting texts.

Perhaps the church could overcome these sub-Christian standards more readily if it ceased arguing about them on Christian grounds, and recognized more frankly that there are primitive depths as well as sublime heights in religion, not known in secular idealism. That need not persuade us to become secularists. But it might make us willing to let secular idealism speak the "word of God" on occasion.

The formation of a "Free German Republic" in the Soviet Zone of Germany will remind us how impossible it is to rest upon our laurels in our struggle with Communism. The achievements which finally led to unification of the western German state at Bonn were considerable, as was also our triumph in the Berlin "air-lift." Yet this new Russian venture, however obviously lacking in genuineness, will have its propaganda appeal.

It will have the greater appeal so long as the part of Berlin, which we rescued through the airlift, is not allowed to unite with the western part of Germany and is permitted to suffer from serious unemployment; and so long as western Germany is not integrated into the economy of western Europe. We are not creating a "buffer state" in western Germany. It is to be hoped that, however grave the military necessity, we will not rearm the western part of Germany. But we cannot allow French fears or any other prejudices to stay our hands longer in making the part of Germany, for which we are responsible, as healthy as possible, economically and politically. We must do this not only because Germany has become willy-nilly the outpost of the Western world, which we must not allow to sink into despair; but also because the economic health of the rest of Europe requires a healthy Germany. There are Americans who are rightly afraid that a nation as powerful as we may misuse its power. But there is the opposite peril that we may not exercise it when we ought. We happen to have the power, however unworthy of it we may be. There are issues in which we can prove our worthiness only by resolution rather than hesitancy.—R. N.

# Notes From China

*The following notes are taken from a letter from one whose judgment about China we have learned to trust. For obvious reasons it is not possible to identify the author.*

## *The Basic Tendency and Policy of the Communist Movement*

A LOT is being said about government regulations and official negotiations here and there, about freedom and friendly attitudes in this place, or toward this group, and about denials of freedom, arbitrary restrictions, and outright persecution in that place. But these comparisons, important as they are, miss the main point I believe in the process of pursuing a minor one. China it is true is still China. It is a land where in ordinary life pragmatic adjustment of life to life is accustomed to win out over principles and ideology, good and bad. But something really new is welling up in China—a movement which is out to remake the country according to its pattern, enshrined as that pattern is in its ideology. The movement controls a government, and in accordance with its social plans and recognition of certain existing influences which it would rather temporarily win than destroy, it proclaims certain freedoms, among them religious freedom, and the right of private property and limited capitalist enterprise. But the interpretation and enforcement of these freedoms and rights is solely in the hands of the movement, which controls the government, and all means of propaganda, absolutely. A gigantic re-education process of the whole country is in progress, aimed at inculcating basic Communist ideology, primarily in relation to interpretation of recent history, and the present world struggle, but including also a heavy dose of anti-religious propaganda as well. I should say this education, through training courses for everyone ranging from two weeks to three months, is their major effort so far. So little do they trust economic determinism.

The same is true in the economic field. The tendency is toward the centralization of economic control, tempered, in the cities, by a desire not to disrupt economic health to the danger point. In the country control is more direct. Religious freedom is on the whole not respected, and the farmers, though land has been redistributed and is privately owned, are more closely regulated in all their movements and sales. Even in the cities this regulation of movement is increasing. It is not due to war, nor limited to the foreigners. It is part of the general drive toward a politically planned and controlled economy and culture.

## *The Psychology Behind This Movement*

Among the people as a whole, probably the most

powerful force is nationalism. This Communist movement promises to build a strong and united China, and, by George, it has already succeeded in firing on a British warship, ordering an American ambassador out of the country, and making the hitherto omniscient and efficient foreigner await its pleasure in long queues in front of the police office. But, of course, nationalism is a gun which fires in both directions, and is doing so all the time, especially among those who are otherwise the government's most ardent supporters. Also among the people there is an overwhelming desire for peace and stability, at almost any price, and among some a congenital optimism which always seems to me a little fatuous, but is apparently a genuine article of faith for those who hold it.

But more basic as a foundation for the Communist movement itself is, I think, the ideological background of Chinese intellectuals and educated people generally. In that background, Communism has practically no competition. There is no other integrated philosophy of life and society in the field around which a man can integrate his thoughts. The schools for years have under the Kuomintang taught nothing but the most infantile nationalism under this heading, and the presuppositions of higher education as I saw it, were completely bourgeois at the same time completely lacking in integration. Subjects were compartmentalized to an unbelievable degree, and the very conception of objective truth was lacking. A Pharmacy Department teacher complained to me that there was practically no carry-over in the students' minds from general chemistry to pharmaceutical chemistry. It was certainly true from economics to sociology. Each student was training to fit a slot in a bourgeois cultural and economic system which never really established itself in China. This was partly enforced by Koumintang government curricular rules but Christian influence did little to counteract it, even in Christian colleges. The result is that thousands of thinking people believe the whole Communist ideology although its explanations sometimes contradict the facts they see in front of them. The ideology gives meaning to life and has power to accomplish, as they believe, a utopia. Facts must give way. I have seen sincere Christian students frustrated and bewildered by the intellectual power of arguments which to any sensible Westerner look like plain nonsense. And many people whose whole framework of life and feeling is against this ideology,



are tending to pick up its ways of thinking, to accept its interpretation as history, and some of the wildest stories printed in its press. Some churchmen show an overwhelming desire to adjust peaceably, even at the expense of truth, to the power which is remaking China, and to persuade Christians that there is a future for them as Christians in the new order if for the time being they adjust properly. Later they can emphasize the critical aspect of the Christian conscience and the more transcendent nature of Christian truth—after they have removed suspicion that they may be aligned with the New Democracy's enemies. This is understandable but I hardly need to say that, in my opinion, it is neither lawful nor expedient. It is the traditional Chinese defense against invasion, but the Chinese have never before run against an invasion which is so thoroughgoing, which will not stop with power over the political aspect of life. Our new governors have shown that they will respect power shown in integrated institutions exercising a social influence, prepared to stand on and fight for their independent foundations, but not aggressively antagonistic. But too complete a compliance merely leads them on.

#### *The Balance of Power*

I spent so much time on ideology because it seems to me that here at least the holders of power are the victims of the ideologists who do their thinking for them. They can only understand their own interests in the light which these thinkers give on the situation. And it is this which throws the balance of power so far off. All of the political parties in the "coalition" are Communist in the sense that they will in no sense criticize the policies of the Party, though if one of their men is in a responsible position the emphasis of his administration may be a little different. There is plenty of opposition among practical minded businessmen and widespread dissatisfaction among rural people, based mainly on the economic plight, which is not wholly the Communists' fault, though they could be much more practical in their means of dealing with it.

But the tragedy of all this opposition is partly its lack of organization, but more its lack of reasoned policy. An organized group of businessmen who knew what they wanted might well get it in the New Democratic setup, and might even make it expedient for the Communists to compromise for an indefinite period. But in city and country all you have is sporadic banditry and furtive hopes for the advent of cataclysm number three. The most pathetic form which the constitutional optimism I mentioned above takes so often is being told whenever somebody gets you alone, "Just a few months now, and there'll be a great big change." And always the Kingdom must come from outside, never by initiative within.

I think in many ways Christians are on surer ground than other folk, even when they adopt the attitude (which is that of the mass of the church, I believe) of having as little to do with this new thing as possible, and standing firm on their traditional faith and practices. This attitude is irrelevant and negative toward what the Communists are sincerely trying to accomplish, but it reflects the absolute disillusionment and distrust characteristic of the countryside. And in the case of Christians there is the presence of the Holy Spirit which binds them together, however distorted may be their reception of that Spirit. Christian fellowship is unquestionably strengthened and even expanded where it is able to carry on at all. Christian homes are strengthened where churches have been closed. And there are a few examples, like stars in a dark sky, of positive, creative Christian expression in response to the challenge of adversity. I heard of a tailor of foreign clothes in an inland town. His business had shrunk to almost nothing, so he seized the opportunity, as a lifelong Christian, to give himself wholly to the church in the country districts whence pastors had fled, leaving congregations disorganized, following liberation. In one place he not only built up the church again, but started a primary school with volunteer Christian help from the town. The authorities came down like a wolf on the fold, but he was at the door to meet them, and he out-talked them for all their ideology. To him it was an evangelistic opportunity. I've never met that tailor, but he certainly means a lot to me in days of frustration like these.

There are Christians to the right and Christians well to the left of the general position above. The semi-official theology of the InterVarsity Fellowship (I.V.F.) is built around Armageddon and the second coming of Christ in connection with cataclysm number three. And there are Christian intellectuals, most of them not in touch with the church, notably Dr. Y. T. Wu, who believe that God has appointed the Communist movement to bring in His Kingdom through the People's government. Therefore the church must blend absolutely with it. Some time later I will try to analyze these different trends of thought, when I have read more and talked to more people. The trouble is that the Y. T. Wu position is the only one which dares to appear in print.

#### **Author in This Issue**

*Professor Helmut Kuhn has recently returned to Germany where he is a member of the Philosophy Department of Erlangen University. He has taught in this country at North Carolina University and Emory University.*

# Notes From Germany

HELMUT KUHN

**R**UINS speak a brutally frank and obstreperous language. Germany is strewn with ruins and so you might think that here at least the universal ailment of our world is an open wound. But you will soon be disabused. Reality is not readily met with anywhere. "Nature loves to hide" also among the debris of broken cities. In fact, the contrast between appearance and the realities behind it is perhaps nowhere greater at this time than in Germany. This is a deceptive country, especially for visitors from abroad.

The appearance of German life in the Western zones is encouraging indeed. To those who remember the years of chaos and bureaucratically regulated famine, the spectacle offered is a breath-taking one. I do not refer to any particularly brilliant achievements in the field of reconstruction, though they are by no means absent. What impresses me is the normal or almost normal functioning of life in all its spheres—school and travel, commerce and industry, church and politics. Whether you look at shop windows, take a train ride, rent a room in a hotel or order a meal in a restaurant—again and again you are struck by the idea: how much like the Germany of old! And this persistence or resuscitation of the past seems to give the lie to the rubble heaps which once were cities.

Of course, as you compare the present picture with that stored in your memory certain differences are unmistakable. Prices have doubled, tripled, and, in some cases, risen to the tenfold. People, though clean and decent looking, wear threadbare clothes. Visitors not accustomed to the German diet feel hungry an hour after the meal because the food lacks fat. People are much leaner than they used to be, especially the children. But this does not prevent the majority of boys and girls from looking happy, sun-tanned and well-washed. But their mothers' strained and care-worn faces show too often how hard it is to keep them this way. Then there are the many war invalids and, of course, the soldiers of the occupation army who stroll about with bored faces. But in spite of these and some other blemishes the impression prevails: this is still the Germany you knew. And the surprise and wonder which you feel is generally shared. It is like a miracle, people say with gratitude and pride, but also with a measure of diffidence. And it is generally admitted that the process of recuperation was started by two facts: currency reform and the Marshall Plan.

A hard-working people, plodding along familiar paths, heavy laden but not beyond its strength, lives

darkened by care but not dull, cheerless, or discouraged, minds filled with apprehensions but not to the point of despair, much strain but no undue irritability—this is what German life appears to be. There is much truth in this appearance. But it is not the whole truth. The bright picture is transparent toward a dark background. Reconstruction is going forward and the will to live is unbroken. But it is underlaid by a darker strand of consciousness or semi-consciousness. There is the awareness of a reality from which nobody can escape; the nearness of catastrophe. A. E. Housman's line: "Be still, my soul, be still, the arms you bear are brittle," comes to one's mind. The arms with which man wards off catastrophe are brittle indeed. This is the truth more readily learned in Germany than elsewhere. But even here it does not clamor in the streets. Though generally felt it is hidden away, and with good reasons. For the insight is not necessarily a wholesome one.

A friend took me to an ecclesiastic dignitary, head of an educational institution. We were ushered into a comfortably furnished room. An atmosphere of order and peace enveloped us. On the desk was the traditional crucifixus. Our host, serene like his surroundings, dressed in a spotless ecclesiastic suit, showed us with vivid appreciation specimens of the Bibles he had received from America as a gift for his charges. Then he began to reminisce, evoking the night in which mediaeval Cologne, his native city, had perished in a hail of bombs, with a loss of many thousands of lives.

The sky was ablaze and the air heavy with smoke. His heart refused service and he sat down on the pavement, leaning against a lantern pole. He looked across the street toward the house which had been his and which before had belonged to his parents and grandparents. It had caught fire from the top and water had poured into the basement. So it had to be abandoned. "This is the end," he thought. Suddenly someone whose approach he had not noticed shook him by the shoulder. "We must get through this night!" a voice said softly but firmly. Then the stranger spoke of himself. His house too had perished in flames. He had been unable to rescue his wife. Of his two children one had been burned to death before his very eyes. "We must get through this night," the voice insisted. The priest found himself swallowing some drops of brandy out of a nearly empty bottle, a cigarette was broken in two, one half put between his lips and lighted. Then he was once more alone.

During this narrative I strained my eyes to recognize behind the dapper, well-groomed figure before me the grimy and broken one of that night of horrors. Did the smooth and composed features show any vestige of the destroyed face that had been lit up by the flames of burning Cologne? The attempt at discovery was not an easy one and inadvertently my eyes wandered to the crucifix on the desk.

At this moment it dawned upon me that to know something about Germany, it was necessary to make a great effort. Terror, sorrow, and despondency shun the broad daylight. The nearness of catastrophe is a recollection not of some individuals or of many but it is a common possession of the whole people. Some received deadly wounds, others were only singed, but hardly anyone escaped unscathed. Old feuds continue and there is new hatred and dissension. But there is also, a potent though not an overt fact, the community of suffering. Though politically dismembered, the German people is perhaps more united today than it ever was before.

The nearness of catastrophe is not only a matter of the past remembered in tranquillity. It is also a present fact and a threatening future. The ordeal of the Eastern provinces under Bolshevik terror, the desperate struggle for survival of the refugees from the East, the prisoners of war still retained in Russia, the moral and physical ravages caused by the war among the young people who had to fight Hitler's battles, the destruction of property at an unprecedented scale—these and other calamities persist. At least one of these wounds burns in the life of everyone. There are more terrible reminders than ruined houses. In public buildings placards

are exhibited with long rows of pictures of children whose parents are sought, most of them described as "nameless foundlings." Human wreckage still marks the path of the flood of refugees which poured westward in the years of terror 1944 and 1945. Yet there is order. Though misery persists it is under control. But the order so judiciously built and painstakingly maintained is mocked by the threat from the East and the rumors of war.

At the same time, the living and recovering body of Western Germany is tied by manifold links to the agonizing body of Eastern Germany. It is estimated that every day approximately a thousand fugitives from the Soviet Zone cross the border into Western Germany. They flee from starvation, or persecution and imprisonment, or slave labor in mines, into the bitterness of an illegal existence in an overpopulated country with a steadily increasing army of unemployed. Like the refugees from the Nazi terror in past years, these unfortunates seem to forbode a new cataclysm.

The nearness of catastrophe overshadows everything—the *élan* of reconstruction, the joyful or defiant re-assertion after the downfall, the groping after re-orientation, the courage and the despondency, the bitterness and the hope. A re-education of the German people is in progress—not through Allied soldiers (has so phantastic an idea ever been taken seriously by serious people?) but by a greater master. They are, in the word of the Greek tragedian, "taught by suffering." This lesson is not learned in a few months or years. Nor is it certain whether it will ever be learned. It is one of those terrible lessons which destroy the unwilling pupil.

## The World Church: News and Notes

### THE SEGREGATION ISSUE:

#### News from South Africa

*South African Church Council  
Condemns Segregation*

A statement condemning the government's policy of racial segregation was adopted by the National Christian Council of South Africa at a conference in Johannesburg. The statement said:

"We affirm that the fundamental truths we shall neglect at our peril include:

"1. God has created all men in His image. Consequently beyond all difference remains the essential unity.

"2. Individuals who have progressed from a primitive social structure to one more advanced should share in the responsibilities and rights of their new status.

"3. The real need in South Africa is not apartheid (separation of the races) but *eendrag* (unity).

"4. Citizenship involves participation in responsible

government. The franchise should be accorded to all capable of exercising it.

"5. Every child should have the opportunity of receiving the best education that the community can give, and for which the child has the capacity.

"6. Every man has the right to work in that sphere in which he can make the best use of his abilities for the common good."

*Anglican Church Head  
Assails Racial Policy*

The Most Rev. Geoffrey Clayton, Archbishop of Cape Town and head of the Anglican Church in South Africa, condemned the government's policy of apartheid (segregation of the races) in a statement to the Provincial Missionary Conference which met at Port Elizabeth. Representatives of the Anglican Church from all over South Africa, the Rhodesias and the Protectorates attended the meeting.



"Today many people are saying that the way to salvation is through separation," the archbishop said. "This is a new idea for Christians—we do not find it in the New Testament. It is said that we should put up more barriers. This is a new idea for those who were made members of one family in baptism."

"The church is not the place to discuss whether all members of God's family should live next door to one another. Families usually find that it is better not to do so. But if anyone should say that those whom God hath joined together should not have fellowship and brotherhood let him be anathema."

"The worst thing that can happen is that the church be divided racially. A racial church is contrary to the will of Christ. In the name of God let us have no divisions, above all no divisions of this kind. Brothers must be brothers. About that we Christians have orders."

#### *Cape Town Clergy Unite Against Segregation*

Clergymen of churches in the Western Cape who have non-whites in their congregations met in Cape Town and formed a "united front" in opposition to the South African government's apartheid (segregation) policy.

The clergymen were members of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church, The Methodist Church, the Volkskerk, the Moravian, the Rhenish and other churches.

In a statement, the ministers condemned segregation as "opposed to Christian principles" and as having "no Biblical basis."

They said it was the duty of the Christian church to oppose segregation and that such condemnation would have greater force "if it comes from the churches collectively."

Meanwhile, Dr. A. J. van der Merwe, moderator of the Dutch Reformed Church in the Cape, declined to express the attitude of his church towards segregation and the present "resistance campaign." He said, however, that a statement would probably be issued by the Synod, which will meet shortly to consider the matter.

—*Religious News Service.*

#### **Federal Council Fights Segregation**

The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, in a brief filed in the U. S. Supreme Court, declared "that the right to enjoy and exercise the inalienable rights with which every man is endowed by his Creator is not and cannot be confined to physical existence."

"Man is not merely body," it added. "He is also and chiefly mind and spirit and the 'life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.'"

In supporting the petition of a Texas Negro, Herman Marion Sweatt, for a review of the case in which he seeks admission to the University of Texas, the Federal Council, as a friend of the court, contended that "segregation in the matter of a place to live means the ghetto; segregation in matters of the mind and spirit means second-class citizenship."

It was the first such brief filed by the Federal Council.

The Federal Council urged that Sweatt's petition for a writ of certiorari be granted "in order that the inherent issue so overshadowing American life be fully discussed, considered and decided in this great tribunal."—*Federal Council News Service.*

#### **Christians "Warned" Against World Council**

Reaffirmation of Russian Orthodox refusal to participate in the World Council of Churches has been sounded by Fr. G. Rasumowskij, High Priest in Moscow, in an article in the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate (No. 5, 1949).

Describing the Amsterdam Assembly as a "failure," the Russian prelate warned his "Christian Brethren" that the results of the Assembly had "fully justified the decision of the Moscow Church Conference in 1948" in which the Russian Church and satellite Orthodox bodies had pledged themselves to non-participation.

Although not wishing to "offend his Christian brethren throughout the world," Fr. Rasumowskij declares that the Amsterdam Assembly betrayed the "real idea of Christian unity," that is, the "intimate meeting of Christians in the Son of God." The proof of this "betrayal of spiritual ideals" by the World Council, he says, is its "open surrender" since the World Conference of Faith and Order in Edinburgh in 1937.

It is no longer "the strategy of the World Council" to urge its adherents "to seek the Kingdom of God." Instead it leads them into an artificial "ecumenical ecstasy" in order to "conceal the divisions in the church" from them and thus give a deceitful impression of a "pseudo-unity."

In addition, he asserts, the World Council was feverishly trying to build up an organization, like that of the Vatican, so as to become a political power, which was "an ominous symptom" for mankind. The Moscow Patriarchal Church refused to become involved with a "Third Rome"; it intended to devote itself solely to "the way of God's Kingdom."

Rasumowskij said, furthermore, that the Amsterdam Assembly had not been "a conference of churches" in the real sense, but "a meeting of representatives of associated organizations" and church groups with "consultants from the World Council itself." Churches like the non-Greek Orthodox Churches had been faced by the choice either to appear at Amsterdam as "participants without influence" or as "mere observers."

In a point-by-point comment on Fr. Rasumowskij's article, officials of the World Council declared that "the Faith and Order Movement did not look upon its 1937 Conference as the end, but rather as the beginning of the new period of work. It is now preparing for a world conference in 1952. This movement has become one of the most important branches of the World Council of Churches, which has taken over the whole of its work. At Amsterdam itself all the questions which had been dealt with by Faith and Order were thoroughly discussed in Section I, with a view to future plans. Fr. Rasumowskij cannot fail to have read the section relating to this in the Amsterdam Report.

"With regard to the second point—that the World

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Council is trying to become a political power—this is based on a serious misunderstanding. The Assembly sought (in the words of its Message) 'to speak boldly in Christ's name both to those in power and to the people.' But it said equally clearly that it could not identify itself with any political system."

The genius of the World Council is precisely to include in its fellowship Christians of very different political convictions, who agree in their desire to proclaim the Lordship of Christ over all sections of life. "With regard to the third point, the Assembly was very definitely a meeting of churches. All the decisions of the Assembly were taken by the official delegates alone; the consultants were not entitled to vote. The non-Greek Orthodox Churches would not have been 'tolerated as participants without influence' or 'mere

observers,' for they had been expressly invited to decide for themselves whether they wished to be represented officially by a delegation or only by observers."

—*Ecumenical Press Service, Geneva.*

## Moscow Church Organ Bids Churches Unite

An article urging "true Christians" throughout the world to unite against "anti-Christian capitalist warmongers" appeared in the current issue of the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate.

Explaining the position of the Russian Orthodox Church, the article said "its stand is clear. It will do its utmost to maintain peace, but should war break out, the church will bless all defenders of the fatherland."

According to the Journal, the fight for peace should unite Western and Eastern Christians "despite the opposition of Catholic and Protestant leaders who side with the capitalist warmongers."

The church organ called for a discussion of dogmatic differences, which, it said, have kept Eastern and Western churches apart for a thousand years. It urged all Christian believers to ask themselves two questions: "Do you fulfill scriptural injunctions? Do you live the life which Christ brought to earth?"

The Journal scored "capitalist America" where it said there is no racial, religious or national unity. It added: "The United States is dominated by an un-Christian spirit of competition and strife."

Denying that its plea for a world-wide peace movement "is just Communist propaganda," the Journal said:

"A providential hand is directing our efforts against war. This heavenly leadership is clearly testified by the fact that the last world war brought unexpected results for many."

These results, according to the Journal, were "the astonishing growth of Soviet power, the great movement for national liberation, and the world's first realization that good will must be the basis for lasting peace."—*Religious News Service.*

## Christianity and Modern Man

A third year of lecture courses under the title "Christianity and Modern Man" at the Washington Cathedral Library has just been announced by the committee of laymen which has designed and sponsored the courses in previous years.

The committee is offering two new courses this year. The first, "Christianity: Its Contemporary Meaning," will be given by Dr. Clifford L. Stanley, Th.D., professor at the Virginia Seminary in Alexandria. It began on Tuesday evening, October 11, at 8:30 p.m., and will continue on Tuesday evenings thereafter for a total of fifteen lectures.

The second course, "The Alternatives to Christianity," will be given by Dr. A. T. Mollegen, S.T.M., D.D., of the Virginia Seminary in Alexandria. It will begin on Monday, November 7, at 8:30 p.m., and will continue for twelve Mondays thereafter.

Enrollment blanks can be obtained from the Secretary, Washington Cathedral, Washington 16, D. C. The fee for each course is \$10.00.

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